

2008-2009 BUDGET PRESS RELEASE No. 4

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CNW CODE 01+ WEEKLIES

2008-2009 BUDGET

SUPPORTING OUR FAMILIES AND THEIR CHILDREN

Québec, March 13, 2008 – The 2008-2009 Budget, tabled today before the National Assembly by Minister of Finance, Minister of Government Services, Minister responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor Monique Jérôme-Forget, presents a series of measures to further support families.

Families have always been at the heart of our government's concerns and initiatives. For example, we:

- repatriated from the federal government and implemented the Québec Parental Insurance Plan, the most generous program in Canada;
- attained our target of 200 000 reduced-contribution daycare spaces;
- introduced the Child Assistance payment up to the age of 18;
- reduced the income tax of all families.

Our government is devoting today more than 5 billion dollars a year in support for families. The 2008-2009 Budget presents new support measures for families.

Daycare services and expenses

This budget provides for new measures to improve daycare services, namely:

- the creation of another 20 000 daycare spaces over five years. This will raise the number of spaces in the subsidized daycare network to 220 000;
- a substantial improvement to the tax credit for child care expenses. Thus, the cost of child care services will be the same, regardless of whether a subsidized daycare centre or an unsubsidized private daycare centre is used, up to a family income of 80 000 dollars.

Support for children in a situation of vulnerability

In recent years, the government has taken a number of steps to improve academic success. For example, the government allocated more than 140 million dollars to hire over 2 600 professionals to assist children with learning difficulties during their schooling. Today, the government is going further by announcing:

- the creation of a \$400-million fund over 10 years, in partnership with the Chagnon family, to foster the development of children age 5 and under in a situation of vulnerability.

“This fund will finance initiatives that foster the complete development of children to better prepare them for school. I want to pay tribute to and salute the major contribution to Québec society and the social involvement of Lucie and André Chagnon and their children” declared the Finance Minister.

Assistance for assisted human reproduction and adoption

To further help individuals who wish to become parents, the rate of the refundable tax credits for the treatment of infertility and for adoption expenses will be raised from 30% to 50%. This improvement will enable people who opt for one of the two main treatments for infertility, namely, artificial insemination and *in vitro* fertilization, to receive tax assistance of up to \$10 000 a year. For those who turn to adoption, tax assistance of up to \$10 000 per child adopted will be granted.

“This budget demonstrates once again the importance of families for our government. Our actions have borne fruit. Today, the number of Québec births is significantly higher. But we must continue on this course. This budget does much more yet to support families”, concluded Minister Jérôme-Forget.

- 30 -

Source: Catherine Poulin
Press Officer
Office of the Minister of Finance,
Minister of Government Services,
Minister responsible for Government Administration
and Chair of the Conseil du trésor
418 643-5270
514 873-5363
www.finances.gouv.qc.ca